

# NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

**RANDY G. MASSEY  
ACTING UNITED STATES ATTORNEY**

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*Nine Executive Drive, Fairview Heights, Illinois 62208, Telephone (618) 628-3700*

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***For Immediate Release***

***May 16, 2006***

## ***GUILTY PLEA IN EFFINGHAM COUNTY METHAMPHETAMINE CASE***

Randy G. Massey, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that on May 15, 2006, **SHAWN A. FINLEY**, age 24, of Effingham County, Illinois, pled guilty in United States District Court, Benton, Illinois, to Conspiracy to Manufacture, Distribute and Possess with Intent to Distribute Methamphetamine; Distribution of Methamphetamine (3 counts); and Possession of Methamphetamine Manufacturing Materials. The penalty for the Conspiracy violation is not less than 20 years' up to life imprisonment, an \$8 million fine, or both, and at least 10 years' supervised release. The penalty for each of the three Distribution counts is up to 30 years' imprisonment, a \$2,000,000 fine, or both, and not less than 6 years' supervised release. The penalty for the Possession of Methamphetamine Manufacturing Materials is up to 20 years' imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, or both, and up to 3 years' supervised release. The Defendant will also be required to pay a \$100 special assessment on each count of conviction. There is no parole in the federal system. Sentencing is scheduled for August 21, 2006, at 1:30 p.m., at the United States District Court in Benton, Illinois.

According to court documents, the conspiracy operated in and around Effingham County, Illinois, from November 2004 through August 25, 2005. The Defendant admitted that he manufactured methamphetamine during this time period with the assistance of several others. He further admitted that he traveled throughout Illinois and the area of St. Louis, Missouri, to obtain the products necessary to manufacture methamphetamine, including pills containing pseudoephedrine and lithium batteries, and that the conspirators stole anhydrous ammonia from various locations. The Defendant admitted that after producing a batch of methamphetamine, he would drive around the area of Effingham County, Illinois, distributing it to various customers in exchange for money, and that he specifically did so on March 19 and 31, and July 23, 2005. Finally, the Defendant admitted that on August 25, 2005, law enforcement officers executed a search warrant at his home and recovered products which he intended to use to manufacture methamphetamine.

The ongoing investigation is being conducted by the Effingham County Sheriff's Department, the Effingham City Police Department, and other local law enforcement agencies in cooperation with the Effingham County State's Attorney Edward Deters. The ongoing investigation is conducted as part of the Effingham County Project Safe Neighborhoods DRAGUN Team Initiative, a cooperative effort of local, state and federal law enforcement, and state and federal prosecuting authorities, aimed at ridding communities of drugs and guns. The case is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Kit Morrissey.